

Bavarian News

Vol. 2 Nr. 2

Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels and Vilseck

January 25, 2006



Inside Hohenfels' "Box"

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News in brief

SAEDA training

In coordination with the USAG Grafenwoehr DPTMS (Security Division), the 66th Military Intelligence Group will be conducting SAEDA training Feb. 10 in Grafenwoehr and Vilseck, times and location are:

VILSECK (Post Theater)

1 – 2:30 pm (US personnel)

2:30 – 4 pm (LN personnel)

GRAFENWOEHR (Tower Theater)

9 – 10:30 am (US personnel)

10:30 – Noon (LN personnel)

Army Civilian Attitude Survey

Participate in the Army's official attitude and opinion survey of the civilian workforce. It measures job satisfaction, workforce morale, and other issues. Your input is valuable since results are used locally. All Army civilian employees, supervisors, and managers should take the survey over the web. The survey is voluntary and may be taken during your normal duty hours or at home. Available through the end of January, the survey does not apply to military, National Guard Title 32 Technicians, or contract employees. To get to the survey, click <http://cpol.army.mil/survey/dasurvey> or copy this link to your browser.

If you have difficulties accessing the survey: ArmySurvey@questarweb.com. If you have questions about the survey: ArmySurvey2005@asamra.hoffman.army.mil.

VHS Read-In

The Vilseck Middle/High School's Multi Cultural Club would like to invite you to its 10th annual African American Read In on Feb. 5-6. The Read-In is sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English and the Multi Cultural Club, Vilseck. If you or someone you know is available to read during the program, please sign-up by Feb. 2. Contact Rita Joshua by email for additional information rita.joshua@us.army.mil.

POSH training mandatory

All civilian personnel in the IMA-E Region, to include military service members that supervise civilian employees, must complete this refresher training for FY 2006. All new employees that have not taken the initial classroom training must do so prior to participating in this on-line course. To schedule initial POSH training, please contact Ms. Josie Hammond at 475-7215 or josie.hammond@us.army.mil.

<http://training.newmedialearning.com/psh/usarmymae/message.htm>

Vilseck Tax Program starts Jan. 30

The Vilseck Law Office, Bldg. 245, will open its tax assistance program for appointments and walk-ins Jan. 30. Appointments will be offered M – F from 8:30 – 10 a.m. and walk-ins will only be allowed M – F from 1 – 4 p.m. Appointment sign-up starts Jan. 23. Call to see what documents you need to bring to your appointment. DSN 476-3316 or CIV 09662-83-3316.

Hohenfels hails its Warriors

Article and photos by Alice Adler
Bavarian News

The air was electric the evening of Sunday, Jan. 8, as the families of A Company 94th Engineers waited for the return of their Soldiers who had been deployed in Iraq for a year.

As the buses drove through Hohenfels, family members lined the streets in the dark and the cold to cheer, cry and wave flags furiously. Inside the Community Activities Center the Soldiers filed in to music as the crowd of family members went wild, screaming and cheering. No rock and roll star ever got a better welcome. Col. Thomas Vandal, JMRC Commander, and

Lt. Col. James Matheson, USAG Hohenfels Commander, made short speeches, acknowledging not only the Engineers' accomplishments, but their year-long deployment – for many the second such deployment in a three-year period.

Capt. James Hoyman, A Company Commander, then released the troops into the waiting arms of their loved ones. Tears, laughter and reunions followed as families celebrated their Soldiers' return.

Ten days later in the Post Gym, the Engineers were formally welcomed home by the entire Hohenfels community.

School children waved flags and cheered the

Soldiers who stood, proudly, before the crowd. Spouses who were instrumental in managing the Family Readiness Group were honored by Matheson.

In a speech to the assembled community, Matheson said, "As a Community, we thank each family member, spouse and child, for your sacrifices to our nation, and we share today in your joy at bringing back every one of the Alpha Company Warriors safe and sound."

Following the ceremony in the gym, a Welcome Home party in the CAC celebrated the Soldiers' accomplishments with food, fun and prizes.



The joyous ear-splitting enthusiasm of children gathered at A Co.'s homecoming was offset by the quiet and tender moments of loved ones reuniting.

More photos on page 6



Electronic LES, W-2 start Feb. 1 Saves millions, reduces identity theft

USAREUR Public Affairs

Beginning Feb. 1, once-optional electronic versions of Wage and Tax Statements (Forms W-2) and Leave and Earnings Statements will become standard for myPay users in U.S. Army, Europe.

These electronic versions, available for military and civilian personnel at <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.asp>, are valid for all federal and state income tax purposes.

USAREUR officials are working to verify that all deploying Soldiers have myPay access. Soldiers can establish a separate PIN to allow

their spouses access to LES and W-2 information.

USAREUR is making the changes ahead of a Department of Defense initiative, scheduled to be complete by November. The DoD comptroller estimates the changes will save several million dollars and reduce the threat of identity theft for Soldiers and civilians who currently receive paper copies.

In March 2000, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service launched myPay. The site allows service members and civilian employees to manage their pay accounts, process certain pay-related transactions, and view LESs online 24

hours a day.

The myPay site employs the highest industry standards for encryption and security.

The electronic LES improves security and reduces the risk of identity theft because the Soldier controls when and where the LES is viewed, saved or printed. As a result, users' names, addresses, bank account information, and social security numbers are better protected, while providing them quicker access to pay and tax information.

According to the 266th Finance Command, servicing finance offices can still print LESs and W-2s as required by Soldiers and units.

New OHA survey available Feb. 1 Used to compute worldwide allowances

USAREUR Public Affairs

Heidelberg, GE – The next Overseas Housing Allowance Utility Survey for U.S. service members assigned to U.S. Army, Europe is scheduled from Feb. 1 through March 2.

Each year, the Per Diem Travel and Transportation Allowance Committee conducts the OHA Utility Survey to collect utility and recurring maintenance expense data from service members who receive the allowance. The com-

mittee uses this information to compute OHA allowances for service members worldwide.

The survey will be available to all service members who receive OHA and live in privately leased quarters. The survey will be available only on the Internet this year; there will be no paper surveys. Responses can be made on any computer. An unfinished survey can be saved and completed later. However, the unfinished survey can only be accessed from the same computer on which it was begun. The survey will

be available beginning Feb. 1 at <https://www.perdiem.osd.mil/oha/ohasurvey>.

The survey asks service members to report their average monthly costs for utilities and routine maintenance. Respondents should use actual utility bills or maintenance expense records to determine their monthly average.

For the Move-In Housing Allowance portion of the survey, respondents should report actual move-in expenses.

Q&A

What is some of the best advice you have ever been given?



Valerie Dinges

"Use the good advice I get and throw out the bad advice I don't want."

Darryl Lewis

"Be good to people and live life to the fullest."



Vicki Schwarz

"My husband always says pay attention to detail."

Frank McKoy.

"Regardless of the situation, do the right thing."



Jodie Bowden

"Treat people the way that you want to be treated."

Leslie Sheras

"The best advice I have ever been given was from my son. When I ask him why he did something, he says it doesn't matter it's in the past."



Alicia Neal-Akujobi

"Keep it real."

Photos and interviews by Kathy Jordan
Bavarian News

'Thoughts while moving around'

Longer-Term AAFES in Vilseck, College Night, Budget, and Respect and Dignity for all

by Col. Brian T. Boyle
USAG Grafenwoehr Commander

Over the Christmas holidays, the Garrison staff was able to focus on several 'large impact' community issues. This article explains the way ahead for several of these programs.

AAFES in Vilseck. There has been a whole lot of discussion in the community about the end-state of the AAFES complex in Vilseck.

The issue is whether AAFES can 'afford' a large complex at Grafenwoehr and the facility at Vilseck. And of course we have to balance this 'afford' against the needs of the community in Vilseck and the potential safety issue of driving across Highways 2166 and 299 in the winter.

In the first place, we have some time. The earliest the new complex will be open in Grafenwoehr is Summer 07. We have the time to look at the population type (single, married) coming to Vilseck, and their needs. The vision for the Vilseck AAFES complex is to consolidate the three former furniture stores into the main store.

BUT THAT IS NOT ALL THAT WILL BE IN THE MAIN STORE. We will reorganize the store, but we will not take everything out of it. For those of you familiar with the current store, the type of items for sale in the front two rows of shelves will still be available in either the "furniture" store, within an expanded display of items in the shopette, or another facility near the main store. Small appliances, health-care products, containers and bins, writing materials, etc., will still be available. In addition, we are looking to establish a small Ft. Hood, Texas,

"Warrior Way" that many of you may be familiar with. This would combine work-out equipment and sporting goods, and we are also working to determine the right type of electronic gear to have in Vilseck. We also will look at hours in the facilities to meet the demands of the community.

The point is: we are not abandoning Vilseck. We will balance the demands and ensure we efficiently meet the needs of the entire Grafenwoehr and Vilseck community, and, most importantly, we have time to make the right decisions.

Budget. As most of you know, the continuing Budget resolution has made it difficult to do any long-term upgrades of the communities. In fact, USAG Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels have not had a budget since we (Lt. Col. Matheson and I) have taken command. This means we survive week-to-week and can't do any longer-term projects. Right now it looks like we will not get our budget until February. Most reports indicate that it will be smaller than last year's, so the garrison staff will have to carefully scrutinize all planned and future operations. We will likely have to



Col. Boyle

'tighten our belts' and ensure we efficiently administer our scarce resources. The good news is that we have not had to cancel or postpone any of our services – and my goal is to ensure we *never* do this. If, however, we have to, I will ensure all the leadership and community know why before we stop a service.

College Night. I invite all of the community to the Graf-Vilseck College night on Jan. 25. This is a chance for all personnel to get information on colleges from graduates of the colleges. It is never too early to start thinking about higher education, so therefore even grade-school children are invited. The event will be held in Vilseck starting at 5 p.m. More than 40 personnel will be there to "pitch their schools," so I invite everyone out to get information and plan for your long-term education needs.

Respect. We recently celebrated Martin Luther King weekend. This celebration caused me to stop and remember the ideals that Dr. King stood for. In summary, it is respect for everyone regardless of race, creed or religion.

I'd ask all of the community to keep this in mind when dealing with my staff and the other community personnel. As the USAG Grafenwoehr Commander, I am charged with providing quality service support to our Soldiers, family members, and employees. Your personal commitment to treating each other with dignity and respect, and doing what is right when no one is looking will go a long way toward Grafenwoehr community remaining the best place to live and work in Germany.

Soldier Dies of Apparent Alcohol Abuse

Safety Alert from our USAREUR Commanding General

by General David D. McKiernan

I am deeply saddened by the death of one of our young Soldiers who had just returned from deployment on Dec. 23. He was found unconscious in his barracks room shortly after lunchtime on Christmas Day. He and several of his battle buddies had celebrated their return to Germany by drinking alcohol on Christmas Eve. Although the case is still under investigation, the Soldier appears to have died from excessive alcohol consumption.

Soldiers face unique risks when they return from deployment. An involved chain of command is vital to ensuring that redeploying Soldiers are prepared for these risks and avoid making mistakes that could lead to tragedies. In the Army in Europe, we prepare redeploying personnel for the risks they will face and help them make safe decisions by using the USAREUR Reintegration Model. This model serves as the cornerstone of the support we provide to redeploying personnel.

A critical part of the USAREUR Reintegration Model is the planning and execution of the 7 half-day reintegration schedule. Redeploying Soldiers must make a transition from the "24/7" pace of an Army at war back to normal operations. The 7 half-day schedule is a deliberate,



General McKiernan

leader-supervised transition period for all redeployed personnel, including leaders. During this time, training is provided on risks, individual

needs are assessed, and support is provided to those who need it.

Leaders: I ask that you examine your unit reintegration procedures. Ensure that the consequences of risky behavior are being discussed with Soldiers as they return. All leaders, particularly first-line supervisors, must monitor Soldier reintegration. Some Soldiers struggle with the transition from the combat zone and need a support network to help them reintegrate and avoid making mistakes. Talk with your Soldiers and ask tough questions to target the difficulties and concerns they may have.

Redeploying Soldiers: You are our first line of defense and our Army's most precious asset. The unique skills and experience you have gained in combat are invaluable to our Army. I ask you to continue watching out for yourself and your battle buddy back home as you did in combat. If you are having problems with making the transition back to normal activities, ask for help. I firmly believe that requesting help is not only the right thing to do, but a sign of strength.

As we begin a new year, I ask each of you to help me eliminate tragic losses. *No Loss of Life* is our goal. We need every Soldier fully reintegrated, retrained, and ready to continue the fight in the Global War on Terrorism.

Important 2005 tax filing changes

And reminders on rules to keep you straight

Grafenwoehr Law Center

Tax Centers in the three Army communities of the Oberpfalz will open at the end of January.

On-post Tax Centers offer free preparation and electronic filing of federal and state income-tax returns for Soldiers, civilians, family-members, and contractors.

W-2s will soon be available for Soldiers and civilian employees from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service online at www.mypay.dfas.mil. Most banks and investment companies

send reports of interest, dividends, and capital gains by the end of January.

Listed below are some important changes to tax law that took effect in 2005, along with a few reminders about rules that trip taxpayers up from year to year.

Foreign source income. American citizens with income from sources outside the United States must report that income on their tax returns, whether they reside inside or outside the U.S. and whether or not they receive a Form W-2 or 1099 from the foreign payer. *Kindergeld*

paid to German-American couples who file a joint federal income-tax return is subject to U.S. income tax. Taxpayers who reside outside the U.S. and who do not work for the U.S. government may be able to exclude some or all foreign earned income from taxation, but they must report the income on Form 2555 when they file their tax returns. German spouses of Americans who file joint returns must file Form 1116 rather than Form 2555 if the German spouse works for the U.S. government and is paid through the Defense Cost Office.

See **Important**, page 11

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‘Family Day’ key to reintegration

by Shannon Hill
Bavarian News

An increasing number of Soldiers and family members are becoming associated or re-associated with the process of reintegration.

A recent influx of returning Soldiers from Operation Iraqi Freedom have experienced this important process that has been developing over the past two years.

“The purpose,” said Henry McNair, USAG Grafenwoehr Plans Specialist, “is to ease them [Soldiers] back with their families, friends, and community.”

One of the days of reintegration, Family Day, plays a more specific role in helping the Soldiers to readjust to family and a normal military lifestyle.

“This is very important,” says Chaplain (Lt. Col.) William Barbee. “The whole community is a part of this. All of the agencies are actively engaged in helping the Soldiers reconnect with

the community in a healthy, positive way,” he said.

Family Day is unique in that it is the one day of the reintegration process in which family members of the returning Soldiers are invited and encouraged to attend. Throughout the course of the day, important information regarding Soldiers’ financial responsibilities, what to do about increases in stress, relationship changes, and communication between significant others and family members are stressed.

Soldiers deployed downrange receive a significant increase in their pay. Generally, not having much to spend it on down there, they come back with a large amount of money.

“The financial portion really helped me,” said Sgt. Gerald McLaughlin of the representatives from ACS and FAP. They have devised a rendition of the game show “Jeopardy!” which focuses on facts about what is available in terms of financial assistance to the Soldiers. This combines with an attempt to channel some of that money, and encourage investment.

Often after Soldiers return from their block leave, or “the honeymoon” of returning, they experience high amounts of stress related to their return. Some will even experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Information is given to spot signs and symptoms of stress. In the more severe case of PTSD, signals can include nightmares, flashbacks, and unwanted memories. Intervention is available and encouraged, often through a doctor or chaplain.

Family members can also have a difficult time with the return of a loved one. To assist with these issues, a list of phone numbers of emergency contacts is made available.

Recognizing that there might be stressful times for couples and families is also a large part of the day. Families need to prepare for some changes in the home when the Soldier returns. The chaplains introduce a segment called “Couples Communication and Marital Enrichment Assessment.” The goal is to encourage people to realize the obligation of “being and building” a team.

In Briefs

OCS packets due soon

The 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command (JMTC), Officer Candidate Board will be conducted at 8 a.m. on Feb. 14 in Bldg 621 in the first floor conference room. Soldier’s packets are due NLT 27 Jan.

POC: SSG Fields, Shamaria at 475-6952 or SGT Sanchez at 475-6951.

Vilseck road closure

There will be a road closure at Bldg. 226 in Vilseck, during its renovation. The closure will start on 30 January and may affect the surrounding streets. This closure is expected to last until October 2006.

Travel to Italy

Everyone traveling to Italy must check the State Department Travel Guide as part of planning for your trip. With the number of events going on in Italy; i.e., Winter Olympics, Italian Elections etc. Website: <http://travel.state.gov>

G-A Gospel Concert

Celebrating the unity of Black History Month, Feb. 4, starting 2 p.m. at the Jugendheim in Grafenwoehr. POC: Verlene Dickson 01711255400 or 09647-929513.

24/7 Dental Care

After-hours, weekend, and holiday emergency dental care is available in Graf and Vilseck. A dentist will return your call and speak with you about the dental emergency. There is a dentist on call 24/7. Active duty and family members have access to after-hour emergency dental care by calling the local MP station: Graf: DSN 475-8319 or 09641-83-8319; Vilseck: DSN 476-2490 or 09662-83-2490.

Women’s self-defense class in Vilseck

Class is every 2nd Saturday of the month, bldg. 221, 1-4 p.m. Costs: \$36. Adults only. For more Info call DSN 476-2214/2998 or CIV 09641-929769

Vilseck storytime

Come to the Vilseck library for Preschool storytime every Wednesday morning at 10 a.m. Stories and crafts for preschoolers.

POC is Karen Beck at DSN 476-1740.

Banking Hours

25 January: Community Bank, Vilseck will be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will be closed in the afternoon for the monthly staff training.

8 February: Community Bank, Grafenwoehr will be open from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m., due to staff training.

Trouble readjusting?

Are you having difficulties readjusting after your deployment? Are you drinking too much, having arguments with your family and friends?

“Seeking Safety – Repairing the Armor.” is a series of classes about learning coping skills. Come to an information session at the FRG building (273) Dec. 14, 5:30 to 7 p.m.

POC: Amy Parke, Social Work Services, 476-2100, 09662-83-2100

Hohenfels newcomers get big “Hallo”

by Alice Adler
Bavarian News

Family members new to the Hohenfels community used to attend a class called “Newcomer’s Orientation.” Now, those new to Hohenfels will be welcomed into “Hallo Hohenfels,” the new name for the week-long program that is designed to introduce family members to life on the post and in Germany.

The new name of the program is designed to encourage more participation by making the week sound more like the fun that it is, and less like a mandatory Army briefing.

Along with the new name, a new logo was designed, featuring the Hohenfels tower as well as a bit of the blue-checkered Bavarian flag. This new logo is designed to be instantly recognizable, and is featured on new totes and t-shirts that are given to class participants.

Participants are also given a bound reference book that covers a variety of topics. Basic information useful to Americans living in Germany, a post phone directory and a brief history of the area are all included in this book that is designed to stay with the student during their time in Hohenfels as a useful reference manual.

The name is not the only thing about the program that has undergone a radical change in the last few months. Working from a directive from Lt. Col. James Matheson, USAG Hohenfels commander, to “Make Hohenfels a great place to live,” Precilla Tolbert, Relocation Readiness Program Manager, and the rest of the staff at ACS set out to make the program a great introduction to the area.

“We work for Soldiers, of course,” said Tolbert. “My goal is to make sure that every Soldier and family member feels welcome and comfortable here.”

The program consists of two days of introduction to the post and its facilities, one day of AFTB Level-1 classes, and two

days of traveling around the area to introduce participants to life in Germany.

The classroom work is done in the Hohenfels ACS building, with various refreshments served to those involved.

“We want them to get to know the ACS staff and the building,” said Tolbert. In addition, she said, familiarization with the ACS facilities leads to increased participation in the workshops that ACS offers.

The week starts off with the participants learning about the services and offices in the Hohenfels community. Everything from child care, to the APO and the Red Cross is covered. Then participants board a bus and visit many of the facilities in the community. The sports facility, the clinics, the Thrift Shop and the Chapel are just a few of the various places around post that welcome the new members to the community.

The third day of the program is based around basic AFTB classes, providing the participants an opportunity to learn about many of the basics of military life. For a special treat, lunch is provided the first three days in the award-winning dining facilities here.

The last two days of the class begin with lessons in basic German language and culture.



Photo by Christina Wilson

Every month the “Hallo Hohenfels” class poses for a class photo with Lt. Col. Matheson. The photos are then hung on the conference room wall displaying other past graduates of the program.

VCSC offers you benefits, fun

by Kathy Jordan
Bavarian News

“We want people to get involved in the community and realize there is a lot out there to do. We are all volunteers who come together. It’s a benefit for people to get involved in the community. Once they come out they have fun,” said Corrina Todd, president of the Vilseck Community and Spouses Club.

The Vilseck Community and Spouse’s Club is a private organization that has various clubs with monthly events and activities. Clubs range in variety from cooking to line-dancing.

The VCSC is always looking for more activities to be added to their list. “Once you join you can choose any activity or lead an activity,” said Todd.

The organization is composed of teachers, spouses, current and prior military members and men and women in the local community.

“In order to have enough to fit everyone’s needs you have to have a good balance of people from the community. Everyone brings different things to the table and it’s a lot more interesting,” said Todd.

New ideas and activities are always welcome at the VCSC.

“We love new ideas. We are willing to do as many activities as people are willing to lead,” said Todd.

The club has something for everyone.

“It’s not boring; you do a lot of different things. I was enlisted and I just got out of the military. Some people are under the assumption that it is just for officer’s wives. It’s for everybody in the community, it’s a community club,” said Alexis Jones, activities chairperson.

Last year, every senior that applied for a scholarship received money from the community club. “The biggest thing we do as a club is give money back to the community. Scholarships are our big thing. Last year we gave \$7,000 dollars for scholarships for students wanting to attend college to the high school,” said Todd.

The organization works closely with educational as well as community groups.

“We do a lot for the community with the funds we raise. We bought uniforms for the high school volleyball and football teams, and we gave money to the AVID and Renaissance programs at the high school. We have also given money to the Boy Scouts and the community and youth services football teams’ banquet,” said

Gina Kyle, first vice president of the VCSC.

The process for applying for funds from the VCSC is simple.

The organization wanting funds fills out an application and gives it to the Welfare Committee. The community organization will then present their idea to the committee and the request will be reviewed. If the committee deems the idea a worthwhile cause the money will then be given to the organization.

“We can provide support for any community organization that is doing something in a positive manner. We have the money – all they have to do is ask for it. It’s very rare that we would turn anybody down,” said Todd.

Fundraising in a military environment is not always an easy thing to do according to Todd. “As a military community we are moving all the time and it is hard to fundraise. We are not in a normal situation like other people that can have sponsors. We can’t go ask a business to give us money for things. So this is a way to supplement that.”

For more information check out the monthly newsletter, or e-mail vcscinfo@hotmail.com, or visit the website at www.vcscinfo.com

A Day In The Life – Teen Commissary Bagger

by Kathy Jordan
Bavarian News

In the rain, sunshine, sleet or snow, baggers are always on the go helping patrons carry packages to their cars.

Many baggers are teenagers, and they work for tips – often taking out two or three carts of groceries at a time.



Photo by Kathy Jordan

Sergio Gonzalez takes a customer's groceries out of the commissary to their vehicle. Baggers work for tips from patrons of the Vilseck commissary.

A teenage bagger is usually between the age of 14 and 18, and mainly works on weekends at the Vilseck Commissary.

The days they work are filled with twists and turns not often experienced by other types of workers. But baggers enjoy this type of work for many different reasons.

For the past two and-a-half years, senior Sergio Gonzalez has been working as a bagger and enjoys the flexibility of the position.

"I do this job because it is very convenient. I am taking advanced placement classes for college at the high school and I need as much time as I can to study. This job is really good for that – it's fun and you get to hang out with your friends."

Freshman Ashley Austin has put in two months as a bagger, and enjoys the socialization the job offers.

"I get to be with my friends, and I get to meet people in the community everyday. I get to help other people and get to know them."

For senior Matt Hunter, the job offers independence and spending money for future endeavors.

"College is coming up pretty soon. I'm getting some money together to help me get by in college. I also do this because I need a little spending money. I don't like asking my parents for money all the time."

On a good weekend a bagger can make 100 dollars for a hard day's work, and on other days the pay is between 50 and 60 dollars.

"You could have other jobs in the community,

but this money comes faster. And you get paid right there on the spot. You don't get paid by the commissary, you get paid by the customers," said Hunter.

How much money a bagger makes is dependant on the effort they put into it, according to Hunter.

"It's your money – if you work you make money. If you don't work you don't make money," he said.

Often with a job like this that depends on tips, volunteers can get discouraged.

"When people don't give you tips it can discourage you. But you know there are other customers that will give you a good tip that will even things out," said Gonzalez.

A lot of baggers don't like working in bad weather, but other baggers see this as an opportunity to make more money.

"I don't really mind being out in the cold. I am still doing a service for the community and myself. It's more money for me going outside while other baggers are sitting down inside," said Gonzalez.

Being a bagger is a good way for teenagers to meet all types of people with different personalities. When baggers encounter customers with unpleasant attitudes they learn at an early age how to maintain a calm demeanor.

"You have to be patient with customers. You have to deal with them because it's your job and part of your job description," said Austin.

Even when the pay is not always what a bagger hopes for, they have to remain patient and

friendly.

"You have to have a lot of patience. Sometimes the tips aren't always that great. Many times this is the only job you can get, and you have to go for it," said Dennis Hughes, an 11th grader.

Being a bagger has its good days and bad days according to Hughes.

"The worse thing that happens is when you bag three or four carts and you get a dollar for a tip, sometimes they won't give you anything. It bothers you a little because you spent almost 30 minutes bagging and helping them put the groceries in their car," said Hughes.

Other times patrons switch up their preferences in the middle of the bagging process.

"When a customer comes in you start bagging in plastic, or vice-versa, you start bagging in paper. Half way through the order the customer says they wanted the opposite type of material you started bagging the groceries in. They want you to take everything out, double bag it and do all types of special things and when you take it out they may give you a dollar," said Hunter.

The waiting list for the job can range from six months to a year in some cases. There are a few things you need before you can become a bagger.

"They must fill out and file an application, and wait for a call from us. The teenage kids work mainly on Saturday and Sunday," said Berla Jose, head bagger.

For more information on possible job opportunities as a bagger stop by your local commissary.

New HCSC thrift shop is bigger, brighter

by Alice Adler
Bavarian News

Recent visitors to the Hohenfels Community and Spouses' Club Thrift Shop have found that in order to see the Thrift Shop's vast inventory they had to cross the street. That's because when the Thrift Shop opened after the holiday break it did so in a brand new location – across the street from the old building.

The Thrift Shop is now located in building 344, what was once the AAFES furniture store. This new location is much bigger, brighter and makes the shopping experience that much better for the shop's many customers.

In October the AAFES furniture store shut its doors and the staff at the Thrift Shop began to wonder what was going to become of the empty building. "We had completely outgrown the other store," said Thrift Shop manager Maddy Vernieu.

The old location was cramped and dark and was not nearly adequate for the Thrift Shop's needs. Despite the relatively remote location

of Hohenfels, or perhaps because of it, the HCSC Thrift Shop is one of the busiest Thrift Shops in USAREUR.

"Consigners come from as far away as Heidelberg," noted

Vernieu. "Even the Wuerzburg Thrift Shop consigns with us. We do more sales in a day than they do in a month. We just do a roaring trade. We had to expand."



Photo by Alice Adler

Volunteers and employees of the Hohenfels Thrift Shop assemble shelving units in their new location.

Vernieu approached Chris Saucedo, USAG Hohenfels Executive Officer, about what would become of the furniture store's location. "Chris Saucedo and Lt. Col. James Matheson helped steer me in the right direction," she said.

By pure luck, the Real Property Planning Board, which decides the fate of buildings on post and typically only meets once or twice a year, was scheduled to meet in three weeks. Vernieu took her proposal to the board, it was approved in November, and in January the entire contents of the Thrift Shop, including the fixtures, were carried across the street to the new location.

The new location is 1,500 square feet larger than the old building and is much lighter and more open. "It's absolutely beautiful," said Cheryl Pancheco, Thrift Shop consignment clerk. "I thoroughly enjoy working here."

See Shop, page 13

Hohenfels Arts & Crafts reopens

by Alice Adler
Bavarian News

For months now, the community of Hohenfels has been without an arts and crafts shop. Since May the center's doors have been closed and community members have had to look elsewhere for their creative outlet.

That's all changed as of Jan. 18 when the Hohenfels Arts and Crafts Center reopened with a whole new staff.

Doreen Vandal is the center's new framing teacher. The first Saturday of every month at 9:30 a.m., she will be teaching a class in basic framing.

The \$30 class teaches students how to cut and assemble frames, cut mats and glass.

"You actually go home with a finished product you can hang on the wall," said Vandal.

After taking the class, students are eligible to use one of the center's two self-framing stations for a nominal fee any time the center is open.

"It's cheaper if you do it yourself," said Vandal.

Staff will be available to assist you with your framing job, and framing stations can be reserved for specific times.

The wood shop, with its nearly brand new professional wood-working machinery, is up and running as well.

Every third Saturday at 9:30 a.m., wood-working instructor Erich Muenchsmeier will teach a wood shop safety class. The class is free to participants, and taking the class is a prerequisite to being allowed to work on the machines. Also, for a very small fee, those who have at-

tended the safety course can use the multitude of machines and tools available.

The center stocks some wood for woodworkers to purchase, and crafters can bring their own wood and tools as well.

For those who wish to use the wood shop, Muenchsmeier will be on-hand to help out and lend ideas. "You can make anything here," he said.

The retail shop is loaded with supplies as well. Stamping, scrapbooking, sewing, stenciling, flower arranging, and more are all covered in the shop's inventory.



Photo by Alice Adler

Framer Doreen Vandal cuts mat boards in the Hohenfels Arts and Crafts Shop.

"People are very excited that it is finally open," said Brittany Murrell of the retail section.

Murrell points out that as soon as staff training is completed, the center will offer etching services – with the ability to etch on glass, plastics and wood.

The center also has several different kinds of sewing machines that are available for use for a small fee. Visitors are welcome to bring in their sewing projects and use the machines, cutting mats and other sewing supplies.

Crafting groups that are looking for a place to meet are welcome to use the center's rooms free

of charge; just coordinate times with the staff beforehand.

The Hohenfels Arts and Crafts center is interested in greatly expanding their class schedule. If you have a skill that you wish to teach to others, come into the Arts and Crafts center and talk to the staff. They are always looking for volunteers, and in some cases, it is possible that instructors may be able to work as contractors teaching their skills in the center.

The hours of the Hohenfels Arts and Crafts center are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; noon to 7 p.m. on Thursday; and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday.

Blues Band in Vilseck Feb. 18

Second Hand Mojo plays Yesterday's

USAG Grafenwoehr Public Affairs

If you like blues – with a dash of soul, a sprinkle of rock, and lots of roll – then you can wallow in Second Hand Mojo music from 9 p.m. to midnight, Saturday, Feb. 18, at Yesterday's Club on Rose Barracks.

The performance is adult entertainment, and open to all, age 18 and older.

The band has played the local German circuit in 2005 and is making their on-base debut with a special dedication performance for singer Wayne Keeler, who is deploying down-range.

Other U.S. band members include lead singer Katherine Di Crocco, spouse of a JMTC employee, lead guitarist and singer Danny Parker, a JMTC employee, and guitarist Nick D'Amario, of USAG Graf Public Affairs.

German band members include Andreas Trautner on drums, Norbert Scholz on keyboards, and his brother, Rheinhold Scholz, on bass.

Song selections are from artists like Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Jimi Hendrix, Bonnie Raitt, CCR, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Etta James, Wilson Pickett and many others.



Welcome Home Alpha Co. Warriors



Welcome to 'The Box'

Article and photos by Alice Adler
Bavarian News

The Box – it's that mysterious place out beyond the edge of life in Hohenfels where Soldiers go for weeks at-a-time and return with stories of military exercises and wild pigs.

When the rotation is not going, members of the Hohenfels community can get a glimpse of the Box by driving through one corner of it on the Schmidmuhlen road. From this vantage point, the Box looks like nothing more than trees, hills and more trees. But what is it really like in the Box? What is out there besides trees, deer and those infamous wild pigs?

"The Box" is the nickname given to the 10-by-20 kilometer training area in Hohenfels. This relatively small area hosts a number of interesting features that aid in the training of Soldiers not only from all over the United States, but from many other allied countries. In the past year, Soldiers from Poland, Romania, Germany and many other European countries have come to Hohenfels to participate in training in the Box.

The most noticeable features of the Box that aid in training are the five small villages. These small towns, unpopulated most of the time, are MOUT (Military Operations in Urban Terrain) sites where military operations in built-up areas are practiced. On the map these towns are named Kittensee, Raversdorf, Enslwant, Schwend and Ubungsdorf. Like the towns themselves, however, these names are not static. Depending on the final deployment destination of the training unit, the names of the towns are altered to fit the name of places in Kosovo, Iraq or wherever the training unit is destined to end up.

During training, these towns are inhabited, full time, by COBs, or Civilians on the Battlefield. COBs are a mixture of Soldiers from 1-4 Infantry, the OPFOR (Opposing Force), and civilians hired from the local population to play the role of people living in the town. They play shopkeepers, mayors, religious officials, ordinary citizens and insurgents.

Less visible training features in the Box are the four cave complexes hidden in the rocky hillsides. These caves come in various shapes and sizes and are designed to assist in training Soldiers deploying to mountainous regions. Training in the difficult-to-negotiate, pitch-black caves is very different from the kind of training the troops receive in the towns, and instrumental in preparing the Soldiers for the mission ahead of them.

There are also base camps set up in the Box. These base camps, designed to simulate life on base camps in deployed areas, prepare Soldiers for life in the camps and help them train on such important tasks like force protection and force-sustainment operations.

Newly constructed detention facilities are vital to teaching Soldiers about the basics of detaining captured or arrested individuals. They learn proper arrest and interrogation techniques. They also train on how to debrief Soldiers and the proper way to house detainees, and how to work with local

governments when individuals need to be turned over to local law enforcement.

Located near the eastern end of the Box is a short landing strip. This aviation area allows Soldiers to conduct joint training with the Air Force and the Marines by allowing them to bring an aviation element into the training.

The newest feature in the Box is the IED (Improvised Explosive Device) lane. This stretch of highway-to-nowhere is designed to help teach Soldiers how to identify and deal with possible IEDs.

Road signs, guard rails, junked cars, intersections, an overpass and a rotary are all included on the lane to increase in the realism and aid in the training. The new IED lane will get its first use the month when a company of Military Police come to train on the basics of dealing with IEDs.

Some training elements are not permanent but mobile. The AAR (After Action Review) sites are mobile vans with a theater-style environment inside. The AAR is a critical event where leaders are able to evaluate and review the actions of their Soldiers. By bringing these vans out to where the Soldiers are training, leaders are able to evaluate their Soldiers in the middle of the training, without having to wait until the end of the rotation to learn in what areas they need to improve.

Some of the features in the Box are not there for training purposes, but are intriguing additions to the

landscape. A number of ruined buildings can be found in and amongst the undergrowth. These are the last remnants of actual German villages that were displaced by the German Army High Command when the training area was formed in 1937. Churches, cemeteries, houses and barns can all be identified amongst the rubble of what was once 544 different properties and farms.

Much of what can be found in the Box is not altogether different from what is outside of the Box. The rolling, tree-filled landscape, covered with snow this time of year, is relatively unmarked and left wild. This makes the Box an ideal place for other mobile features – the wildlife that can be found there. The land is home to large herds of wild pigs and deer, fox, rabbits and other critters. Life with training Soldiers in their midst can sometimes make these animals relatively fearless of people and vehicles. If you are lucky enough to catch a glimpse of one, look to your heart's content, but do not approach them. Many of the animals, most notably the wild pigs, have a reputation for unfriendliness. In addition, sometimes these animals venture into the roads around the Box, so drive with care, especially at night.



The new IED lane in the Box is a "road to nowhere" that will help train Soldiers in the identification of IED's.



Cave entrances are hidden amongst hills and rocks.



Soldiers from 1-4 Infantry play the role of insurgents lying in wait in the caves.



Base camps allow Soldiers to train on important issues such as force protection.



Training Soldiers interact with COBs during a rotation.



COBs play the role of towns people during training.



Skills such as using a translator are greatly facilitated by the local nation's COBs.

Vienna – resplendent with culture and architecture

Article and photos by Alice Adler
Bavarian News

Here you are in the heart of Europe, and maybe you feel like you have not adequately soaked up all the culture Europe has to offer. Sure, you've sampled German beer, bought Czech crystal and Polish pottery, and drove on the autobahn, but maybe you're craving some of that old world sophistication that European cities are legendary for. Where should you go?

The answer is practically next door. Vienna, the capital of Austria, our neighbor to the south, is awash in culture of all kinds. Visitors will find museums, art, music, beauty and culture around nearly every corner of this incredible city. Austrian writer Karl Kraus stated that "The streets of Vienna are surfaced with culture as the streets of other cities are with asphalt."

Vienna is one of the few major cities of Europe to have made it through two world wars with fairly few scars. As a result, the city is resplendent with breathtaking, oversized architecture.

Dominating the center of Vienna is the massive Hofburg complex. This palace, which is impossibly large and home to several of Vienna's great museums, was the winter residence of the powerful Hapsburg family. The Hofburg is so large it is often referred to as a city within a city.

Many visitors also like to take a peek at the Hapsburg's summer residence, the Schoenbrunn Palace, another huge complex with sprawling gardens and 1,441 rooms. And just when you think there can't be another massive palace, Belvedere Palace and its gardens awaits.

In addition to palaces of all kinds, Vienna is home to over 400 churches. The most important one is St. Stephan's Cathedral.

Located in the center of Vienna, it is one of the great Gothic churches of Europe and its single towering spire has become the symbol of Vienna. Treasures abound inside, including fu-

neral urns that contain the remains of 56 members of the Hapsburg family.

Vienna has many important museums to visit, but one of the best is the Schatzkammer, the city's Imperial Treasury. Its collection of royal and ecclesiastical treasures is the best in the world. There you can see such wonders as an emerald bigger than a man's fist, a massive Narwhal tusk, and the 9th century saber of Charlemagne. The coronation crown, robes and jewels of the Holy Roman Empire are here as well, reminding the visitor of the crucial role Austria has played in the long and colorful history of Europe.

After checking out museums, visiting churches and ogling architecture, your feet will need a rest.

There is no better place to rest up and experience some of Vienna's culture than in one of the city's 4,000 coffee houses. Vienna's coffee houses are an essential part of life in this city that invented the idea of spending the afternoon lingering over a good cup of coffee. Read a newspaper, enjoy a piece of cake, and sit for awhile in the formal yet comfortable atmosphere the coffee houses provide.

No article on soaking up the culture in Vienna would be complete without mentioning music.

A vast number of the greatest composers of the western world have been Austrian, a fact that Vienna does not hesitate to point out at every opportunity. For hundreds of years the great composers and musicians of the world have flocked to Vienna, and as a result wonderful concerts and performances can be heard practically every evening.

The music of Vienna's favorite son, Mozart, is a popular choice. Men and women dressed in the costumes of Mozart's day wander the popular tourist areas selling tickets to performances of his music.

If your budget does not permit seeing a concert, simply take an evening stroll down Kaerntnerstrasse, the main shopping area and pedestrian zone in the heart of Vienna. Street musicians of all kinds wait to entertain you for the price of your pocket change. Where else but in Vienna could you hear classically trained opera singers belt out arias for a Euro?

While you are there take some time to do some window shopping on this busy street. With the world-famous Vienna Opera House at one end and the Cathedral of St. Stephen at the other, this street is popular with locals and tourists alike.

Take some time to visit the culture next door. Austria and Vienna wait to show you things you learned about in history class.



Vienna is a city rich with Palaces, and Belvedere Palace is but one.



The Vienna State Opera House is one of the most important Operas in the world. Performances can be seen here daily – sometimes in period dress.



The gardens of Schoenbrunn Palace are a great place for a stroll.



The Hofburg Palace complex lies in the heart of Vienna and is so large it can be considered a city unto itself.



Only in Vienna are the street musicians opera-quality singers. Vienna is all about music, everywhere you turn.



St. Stephan's Cathedral is one of the greatest Gothic churches in Europe. Its 137-meter steeple has come to symbolize Vienna.



A romantic horse-and-carriage ride is one way to see the city.



The interior of St. Stephan's Cathedral is filled with paintings, carvings and statues.

EUCOM, components prepare for pandemic flu

by Maj. Pamela A. Q. Cook
Directorate of Public Affairs (ECPA)

STUTTGART, Germany – Officials have met in Stuttgart to plan for how best to deal with a potential outbreak of avian influenza that could mutate into a pandemic flu.

Conference attendees, including subject matter experts from throughout the region, are creating a comprehensive plan in coordination with U.S. European Command, host nations, the De-

partment of Defense and other governmental agencies to deal with a possible pandemic caused by the mutation of the H5N1 influenza virus, more commonly known as “bird flu,” that is currently circulating through domestic and wild bird flocks around the world.

“Due to the serious consequences presented by a potential pandemic, and in support of U.S. government worldwide efforts, EUCOM is coordinating with appropriate organizations and

governments to ensure that people are protected and informed,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Ron Sanders, the lead project officer for EUCOM’s pandemic influenza response team.

The DOD, Department of State, Health and Human Services, World Health Organization, and other governments and agencies are preparing for a possible pandemic – a global outbreak of disease – of avian influenza. These organizations are building on the knowledge and experi-

ence from other recent public health crises, including SARS and the 2001 anthrax attacks, to meet the threat of a pandemic outbreak. EUCOM and its component commands are continuing the planning process to protect their service members, family members and employees while maintaining operational readiness.

To read the full story, go to <http://www.100asg.army.mil/info/avian%20flu.pdf>

Important

Continued from page 2

Taxpayer identification numbers. Filers must provide the taxpayer identification number of each person for whom they claim tax benefits (e.g., personal exemptions, earned income credit, child tax credits, etc.). In most cases, the taxpayer identification number is the person’s Social Security number. This applies even if the person is an infant born in 2005. For Americans married to non-resident alien spouses, the Internal Revenue Service will issue an individual taxpayer number (ITN) upon application. It takes about four weeks after applying to receive the ITN.

Signing joint return for downrange spouse. If a spouse is unable to sign the return because he is serving in a combat zone (Iraq or Afghanistan), or a qualified hazardous-duty area (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, or Macedonia), and the other spouse does not have a power

of attorney or other statement, the other spouse can nonetheless sign for the deployed spouse. In such cases, the filing spouse must attach to the return a signed statement explaining that the other spouse is deployed to a combat zone or hazardous-duty area.

Joint responsibility for returns. Married taxpayers may be held responsible, jointly and individually, for the tax and any interest or penalty due on their joint return. One spouse may be held responsible for all the tax due even if all the income was earned by the other spouse. This may apply retro-actively on any return filed before a divorce, even if the divorce decree states that the other former spouse will be responsible for any amounts due on previously filed joint returns. In some cases, one spouse may be relieved of joint liability for tax, interest, and penalties on a joint return for items of the other spouse that were incorrectly reported on the joint return. One must file Form 8857, Request for Innocent Spouse Relief, to request such relief.

Personal exemptions. The amount has been

increased to \$3,200 for each exemption to which the taxpayer is entitled.

Standard deduction. The standard deduction for taxpayers who do not itemize deductions on Schedule A, Form 1040, has been increased. The amount depends on the taxpayer’s filing status.

Social Security and Medicare taxes. The maximum wages subject to Social Security tax of 6.2% has been increased to \$90,000. All wages without limitation are subject to Medicare tax of 1.45%.

Reporting interest and dividends. Taxpayers who have interest or dividend income of more than \$1,500 are not eligible to use 1040EZ. They must file either Schedule 1 with Form 1040A or Schedule B with Form 1040.

Individual retirement arrangements (IRAs). Married couples filing joint returns can each contribute up to the maximum amount for their IRAs, even if one spouse had little or no income.

Earned income credit. The amount of income to be eligible for this credit has been in-

creased, depending on filing status and number of children claimed. The annual amount of investment income to be eligible for this credit has been increased to \$2700. The taxpayer may now choose to include combat pay in earned income for the purpose of computing this credit.

Tax benefits for adoption. The adoption credit and the maximum exclusion from income of benefits under an employer’s adoption-assistance program have been increased to \$10,630.

Hope and lifetime learning credits. The amount of income to be eligible for these credits has been increased.

Refunds on late returns. Taxpayers due a refund who fail to file timely returns must file the return within three years of the due-date (including extensions); otherwise the refund will be forfeited to the government.

For more information, phone Grafenwoehr Tax Office at 475-7777, Vilseck Tax at 476-2289/3316, or Hohenfels Tax Office at 466-2401.

German Culture 101

Time runs differently in Bavaria

by Martina Bias
special to Bavarian News

This popular Bavarian clock boldly proclaims: “In Bayern geh’n die Uhren anders” (in Bavaria, the clocks work differently).

This statement simply implies that the pace of life is viewed to be more leisurely, with different priorities, than you would find in states further up north in Germany.

The term “Bayerische Gemuetlichkeit” (literally translated: Bavarian cozyness) describes it best. This is similar to how the Southern and Northern states in the U.S. are considered to be different in their lifestyles and time management.

Contrary to what one might expect, these Bavarian clocks do keep time accurately. However, on closer examination, you will notice that the numbers are not arranged in the same way as on a standard clock. On this time- keeper, the three is found on the left side, and the nine on the right, while the twelfth and sixth hours are kept in their original positions.

This means that the hands of the clock will move in a counter-clockwise fashion (a humorous twist for which some might consider the Bavarians “backwards” because of their often extreme conservatism and steadfast traditional ways).

To many Americans, the way Germans tell time (or tell you what time it is) really does seem like they are thinking backwards. Let me illustrate this point:

The other day, my son’s German soccer coach called to tell us that the next practice was on Saturday at “viertel drei.” The person taking the message was fluent enough in German to know that “drei” is three and “viertel” means quarter. Therefore, he deducted that my son’s team was meeting at either 3:15 or 2:45 p.m. Unfortunately, this reasoning was incorrect, as Germans see “viertel

drei” as one quarter into the hour that will end at three o’clock. Translated for my dear reader, that would make it 2:15 p.m.

able to address one of your suggestions in one of my future columns.



To further confuse you, a German would describe 2:45 p.m. *not* as a quarter to three, but rather three-quarters into the hour that ends at three, known as drei-viertel (¾) drei. Similarly, German time statements don’t include “half past” two, rather it would be “half-to” three.

Now, here is a test to see if you have understood how Germans describe time and can follow their logic:

What time is it when I say “fuenf vor drei viertel sieben (literally: five before three quarters seven)?

It takes a little math to figure this out, but if your answer is 6:40, you have mastered the skill of telling time the German way.

However, if this little experiment has left you even more confused, don’t despair. The good news is that the above described time statements are the informal way of expressing time in Germany.

The “official” time, used on train and bus schedules, for stating opening hours and the likes is what Americans refer to as “Military Time,” because Germans do not use the distinction of a.m. and p.m.

So, if you want a German friend to meet you at 2:30 p.m., you can tell him 14:30 and they will clearly understand.

I hope I have been able to clarify German timing to you a little. Now you will always know “was die Stunde geschlagen hat” (literally “what hour it has chimed”), a German saying used to say “you know what is going on.”

Have you ever wondered why Germans do certain things? I would welcome your questions and comments. Email me at martina.bias@us.army.mil, and I might be

German Baking 101

Bienenstich – a tasty German “bee sting”

by Martina Bias
special to Bavarian News

Today, I am introducing you to the German cakes called “Blechkuchen” (literally: sheet-metal cakes).

These flat cakes are baked on a “Backblech” (literally: baking sheet-metal), or “Kuchenblech” (cake sheet-metal), which in essence is a jelly-roll-pan that measures about 16 inches by 11 inches, and is about 1 ½ inches deep.

Many German stove and oven manufacturers produce baking sheets that are the perfect fit for their appliance, so ask your landlord if you did not receive one upon moving in.

Germans love to prepare Blechkuchen because they usually keep well or can serve a large number of guests. They also work well for parties, as they can be cut into smaller or larger pieces, as needed.

Blechkuchen can feature two or more layers. Most start out with a layer of cake dough on the bottom, which is then topped with a fruit and/or cream cheese or cream layer. The top crust often consists of streusel, meringue or is spread with melted chocolate that will harden for an attractive presentation.

Apple and Zwetschgen (German plums) cakes are some of the most popular Blechkuchen in Germany. However, the variety seems endless with fillings ranging from poppy seed and nuts to even savory meat and cheese layers.

As a typical Blechkuchen, I chose for today’s recipe a sweet concoction called “Bienenstich” (literally: bee sting).

This treat starts with a bottom of yeast dough. Our second layer is made from whipped cream and custard. The “icing” on the cake is the part that gave this cake its name. It consists of

caramel and sliced almonds. The story goes that a baker prepared the cake with the sticky topping one day. The sweet smell attracted a bee, which then stung the baker as he was trying to protect his creation. The original version of this cake was said to have been frosted with honey, butter and almonds.

Bienenstich is a German treat you can fix anytime of the year, and I promise you that this is a bee sting that you will want to experience over and over again.

- Guten Appetit!
- Dough:**
- ½ cup warm water
 - 1 ½ tsp. active dry yeast
 - 4 Tbs. (½ stick) margarine or butter, softened
 - 2 Tbs. sugar
 - ¾ tsp. salt
 - 2 large eggs
 - 2 ½ cup flour
- Filling:**
- 1 cup milk
 - ½ vanilla bean or 1 tsp. vanilla extract
 - ¼ cup sugar
 - 2 Tbs. corn starch
 - 2 egg yolks
 - 1 ½ cups whipping cream
- Topping:**
- 10 Tsp. butter or margarine
 - 5 Tbs. whipping cream
 - ¾ cup sugar
 - 2 ½ cups sliced almonds

In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add remaining dough ingredients and stir until the mixture becomes cohesive. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured surface and knead for 5 – 8 minutes until it is smooth. You can also knead the dough with a kitchen machine, using the dough hook for 4 – 7 minutes at medium speed.

Place dough in lightly greased bowl, turn to grease all sides. Cover and let rise in a warm place for about one hour.

Meanwhile, for the topping, melt the butter or margarine in a large pan. Add cream, sugar and almonds. Bring to a boil and simmer at low heat for 5 minutes. Cool slightly.

Roll out the dough on a lightly flour surface until it has the approximate size and shape of the Backblech or jelly roll pan. Place

in bottom of pan. Prick with fork several times. Spread topping over dough. Cover and let rise for 30 more minutes.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Bake cake for 30 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack.

For the filling, bring ¾ cup of milk and ½ vanilla bean to a boil (if using vanilla extract, add to the cold mixture following).



Whisk remaining ¼ cup of milk with sugar, starch and egg yolks. Remove milk from heat. Whisk in the cold mixture. Return to heat and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Cool the custard.

Whip cream until stiff peaks form. Gently fold in custard.

Remove cooled cake from pan and slice one time horizontally. Remove top layer. Spread filling on bottom half of cake and top with almond covered layer. Cut into desired size pieces.

Yield: 12 medium-size pieces.

Shortcut: You may substitute the following for the from-scratch filling:

Prepare one box cook-and-serve vanilla pudding according to direction.

Cool. Gently fold into 12oz of Cool Whip. Use as above.



Falcons split victories with Tigers

Article and photos by Kathy Jordan
Bavarian News

On Jan. 14 the Vilseck and Hohenfels varsity teams played at Memorial Fitness Center on Rose Barracks. The Vilseck Falcons defeated the Hohenfels Tigers 54 to 48.

At the end of the first quarter the Falcons and the Tigers were tied 8 to 8.

The Falcons and the Tigers continued to play aggressive ball, and by the end of the third quarter the score was Falcons 33, Tigers 30.

With less than 1:43 seconds left in the fourth quarter, the score was Falcons 49, Tigers 41. Both teams continued to play good offense and defense. The Tigers made 7 points and the Falcons scored 5 within the minute and-a-half left in game play. When the buzzer sounded the Vilseck Falcons were the victors.

Lead Scorers for Vilseck: Jose Rojo 14, Derrick Jones 12 and Mike Klein 10; Hohenfels: Chris Tsemelis 15, BJ Denson had 12 and JP Parks 10; Rebounds for Vilseck: Derrick Jones 15, Kollin Jordan 8 and Rojo 7; Hohenfels: BJ Denson 11, JP Parks 8 and Anthony Marshall and Steve Washington each had 5; Assist for Vilseck: Mike Klein had 3; Blocks for Hohenfels: Denson had 6.

The Vilseck junior varsity boy's team defeated the Hohenfels Tigers 40 to 28.

Lead scorers for Vilseck: Ronnie Turner 13, Devon Douglas 9 and Tre White 8; Hohenfels: Sung Byon 7, Randy Taylor 6 and Alonzo Darden 5; Rebounds for Vilseck: White, Turner and Douglas each had 7; Hohenfels: Taylor had 6 and Robby Kasse had 5.

The Lady Falcons defeated the Lady Tigers 40 to 34. Top Scorers for Hohenfels: Mica Nicholson 11, Shanote Davis 8 and Turner 6. Vilseck: no stats available.

Vilseck no longer has a girl's junior varsity team.

On Jan. 13, the boy's varsity teams met in Hohenfels at the school gym. The Tigers defeated the Falcons 59 to 58.

The game was filled with three point shots, jaw-dropping dunks and blocks. The gym was packed with fans from both teams and the crowd was not disappointed by the teams' defensive and offensive plays.

The Tigers led the Falcons 26 to 22 by halftime. By the end of the third quarter the Tigers led by a score of 40 to 39.

In the fourth quarter, with 16 seconds left on the clock, Tigers' Chris Tsemeris made one of two shots from the foul line. The point in the last seconds of the game gave the Tigers the win.

Lead scorers for Vilseck: Rojo 17, Jones and Dextra Johnson each had 12 and Jordan 8; Hohenfels: Denson 16, Parks 11 and Brandon Merriweather 10; Rebounds for Vilseck: Jones 15, Jordan and Johnson each had 10 and Rojo had 7; Assist for Vilseck: Johnson had 2; Hohenfels: Parks had 5; Steals for Vilseck: Rojo had 3; Hohenfels: Denson had 5.

The Vilseck junior varsity team defeated the Tigers team 33 to 16. Lead scorers for Vilseck: Johnson 10, Douglas 9 and Derrick Schwartz 6; Hohenfels: Taylor had 6 and Byon had 5; Rebounds for Vilseck: White had 9, Douglas and Turner each had 8 and Robert Wright had 4; Steals for Vilseck: Troy Whitehead had 3; Blocks for Hohenfels: Alonzo Darden had 3.

The varsity Lady Falcons was defeated by the Lady Tigers 34 to 28. Lead scorers for the Tigers: Vanessa Turner and Esslyn Andino each had 11 and Merriweather had 5; Rebounds for the Tigers: Lyndy Axim 6 and Vanessa Turner 5; Steals for Hohenfels: Andino had 4. Vilseck: no stats available.



Vilseck player Dextra Johnson goes up for a shot against Hohenfels Steve Washington at the Hohenfels gym.



Falcons junior varsity player Ronnie Turner prepares to throw the ball into play as Tigers Alex Lemasters attempts to block the pass.



Lady Falcons Shamyra Coleman plays tight defense against a Lady Tigers offensive move.



Vilseck player Chi-Kobe Murry brings the ball down the court against members from the Hohenfels varsity squad.



HHS Freshman Samantha Oberlin opts to purchase her lunch with her PIN account number.

HHS starts new lunch PIN system

by Lilian Santelices

In November 2005, Hohenfels High School followed trend with many DoDDS schools and began a new school lunch payment program. The standard pre-paid lunch tickets are no longer accepted at many DoDDS schools. Students now have two choices from AAFES as to how to pay for their lunch: cash or PIN number.

Families had the opportunity to take their old lunch tickets to the PX for credit toward the PIN account.

The new system has changed the pace of the lunch line. Once the student enters their code, a screen comes up showing the students picture and name. The cashier enters what the student is buying for lunch and the amount is automatically deducted from the account. The fact that lunch tickets are no longer accepted has been a nuisance to some students.

Angela Reinick, a ninth grader, said, "It takes longer to go through the line, but it is better when I do not have money with me."

The new system is not without flaws. A problem that has occurred is that occasionally the system stalls, which backs up the lunch line and makes it longer to go through. One problem that may occur is that the system may state that the student needs a new account.

Hohenfels Vice Principal David Carlisle said, "We were hoping that it would speed things up, but it has not." School administration is still optimistic that the flaws with the system will be worked out quickly.

Other students, however feel that this is an improvement rather than a setback. Eighth

grader Melissa Caples said, "I think that everyone should use the PIN system, because the lines would be shorter."

Karl Hoeh, a senior says, "It was a good idea, but it did not work out well. It still takes too long to get through the lines."

The system has stopped the need to produce millions of pieces of paper, which can be easily lost by students. The change has given the school a new way to use technology to its advantage. The lines have begun to move at a fast pace when operating correctly.

The PIN system is another example of how the school has adapted to the use of technology.

"It was a good idea, but it did not work out well. It still takes too long to get through the lines."

Shop

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The increased floor space has allowed the Thrift Shop staff to add several new features to the shop. An HCSC information board tells the community about what is happening with the Club. A new arrivals rack allows customer to peruse the latest clothing items to be consigned. Instead of being crammed into corners, there is now an entire room devoted to furniture and other large items. This will allow the shop to take in many more furniture consignments than

they used to be able to handle. In the coming weeks the shop will unveil a changing room as well, saving customers from having to try on clothes in the rest room. Entry to the Thrift Shop is easier as well, since the new building does not have any steps up to the entrance. The aisles are now wide enough for baby strollers and carriages.

The feedback from the customers has been completely positive. "Everyone likes it," said Vernieu, "It makes shopping so much more enjoyable."

Luise Gooden, both a consigner and shopper,

agrees. "It's nicer and bigger. So much more space now."

The move across the street was a colossal feat accomplished in only a day because of the help of many committed volunteers. "We want to thank 1st. Sgt. Craig Simpson and the Soldiers of 1-4 Infantry," said Vernieu. The Soldiers carried the entire contents of the store across the street in only a few hours.

Putting the new store together was the next challenge. This potentially difficult process was made smooth by yet more volunteers. "The Walls family, Master Sgt. Jerry Hutchins, Amanda Hoffer and Karin Smudsinski all came

in as volunteers and worked hard," said Vernieu. Additionally the Thrift Shop's staff volunteered their weekend hours to help assemble the new shop. "Cheryl Pancheco, Marion Hascins, Evelyn Hutchins, and Ursula Sompson were great," noted Vernieu, "And Cheryl and Marion's husbands came home from their deployment in Iraq that week as well."

This team effort has led to a Thrift Shop that the entire Hohenfels community can be proud of and enjoy. The Thrift Shop is open every Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and the first Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.